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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/017,821	12/12/2001	Jeremy E. Dahl	005950-763	9215
7590	03/18/2004			
			EXAMINER	
			WOOD, ELIZABETH D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1755	

DATE MAILED: 03/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	Applicant(s)	
10/017,821	DAHL ET AL.	
Examiner	Art Unit	
Elizabeth D. Wood	1755	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-47 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-47 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2/14/02, 2/10/03.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: ____.

Specification

The examiner has not checked the specification to the extent necessary to determine the presence of **all** possible minor errors (grammatical, typographical and idiomatic). Cooperation of the applicant(s) is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant(s) may become aware of in the specification, in the claims and in any future amendment(s) that applicant(s) may file.

Applicant(s) is also requested to complete the status of any copending applications referred to in the specification by their Attorney Docket Number or Application Serial Number, **if any**.

The status of the parent application(s) and/or any other application(s) cross-referenced to this application, **if any**, should be updated in a timely manner.

Claim Objections

Claim 39 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim must refer to other claims in the alternative only. See MPEP § 608.01(n). The claim has been further treated on the merits as though it was properly drafted.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 34-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The metes and bounds of these claims are indeterminable. The examiner acknowledges applicants' definition of "enriched" as set forth in the specification; however, such does not obviate this rejection because the definition itself is relative with no point of reference. The statement that the term "enriched" refers to materials "at least partially separated from nontetramantane materials" is a process limitation that fails in any way to identify the composition. The definition of a "concentration of at least 25...times as great as the concentration exhibited in a feedstock" fails to solve this problem. We do not know the identity of the feedstock and therefore the terminology is relative. Moreover, this definition refers to "a" feedstock. "A feedstock" could have the same amount of adamantine as "a product" and therefore could be the same composition, depending upon how much material is present in that feedstock. Again, this definition comprises relative language with no proper point of reference.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

- (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 34, 39 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Lin et al. article submitted by applicants.

The instant claims recite simply "enriched" higher diamondoid component. As these components are naturally occurring, to be "enriched" they need only be slightly concentrated over nature. The definition supplied by applicants, namely the statement that the term "enriched" refers to materials "at least partially separated from non tetramantane materials" is a process limitation that fails in any way to identify the composition. Accordingly, the instant claims would have been obvious in view of Line et

al. because the reference teaches concentrating tetramantane in a residual fraction. In other words, the reference teaches enriched tetramantane.

Double Patenting

A rejection based on double patenting of the "same invention" type finds its support in the language of 35 U.S.C. 101 which states that "whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process ... may obtain a patent therefor ..." (Emphasis added). Thus, the term "same invention," in this context, means an invention drawn to identical subject matter. See *Miller v. Eagle Mfg. Co.*, 151 U.S. 186 (1894); *In re Ockert*, 245 F.2d 467, 114 USPQ 330 (CCPA 1957); and *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970).

A statutory type (35 U.S.C. 101) double patenting rejection can be overcome by canceling or amending the conflicting claims so they are no longer coextensive in scope. The filing of a terminal disclaimer cannot overcome a double patenting rejection based upon 35 U.S.C. 101.

Claim 1 is provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 1 of copending Application No. 10/052,636. This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim 21 is provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 18 of copending Application No. 10/052,636. This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim 22 is provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 19 of copending Application No. 10/052,636. This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim 27 is provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 20 of copending Application No. 10/052,636. This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim 30 is provisionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 21 of copending Application No. 10/052,636. This is a provisional double patenting rejection since the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-47 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims either 1-32 of copending Application No. 10/012,545 or claims 1-42 of copending Application No. 10/052,636. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they differ from one another only in the scope of

coverage being sought. The instant claims involve a tetramantane and/or pentamantane or "higher diamondoid composition and method for recovering compositions enriched in these components that appear to differ from the copending claims only in that the product produced may differ in scope based on the preamble language regarding the desired product (especially when claims refer to simply "desired" product. Accordingly, the processes and composition will be substantially similar and overlapping and will differ only in scope regarding the presence or absence of other diamondoid components. The two inventions are therefore directed to substantially the same inventive concept.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claims 1-47 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claims of copending Application Nos. 10/012,333, 10/012,709, 10/012,704, 10/012,337, 10/012,546, 10/012,336 and 10/012,334. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the instantly claimed diamondoid composition and method for recovering compositions rich in higher diamondoids are generic to the species claimed in each of the copending applications, and it has long been established that particularly claimed species render the genus obvious.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Conclusion

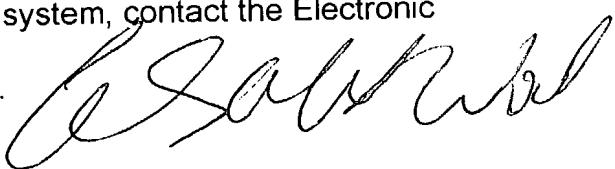
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicants' disclosure.

Applicants are advised that any evidence to be provided under 37 CFR 1.131 or 1.132 and any amendments to the claims and specification should be submitted prior to final rejection to be considered timely. It is anticipated that the next office action will be a final rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elizabeth D. Wood whose telephone number is 571-272-1377. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 5:30-2:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mark Bell can be reached on 571-272-1364. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



ELIZABETH D. WOOD
PRIMARY EXAMINER